

Minutes of the East Greenwich School Committee

Tuesday, March 6, 2012

Archie Cole Middle School Library

100 Cedar Avenue

East Greenwich, RI 02818

6:06p.m. Executive Session, Mr. Green made a motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Winters to go into executive session for discussion and/or action regarding those items of business exempt from open meetings under General Laws of Rhode Island 42-46-5 (a) (2) Collective Bargaining- Teachers, Grievances-Custodial. The vote carried 4-0.

7:00p.m. Regular Meeting

Those in attendance were Mr. Robert Durant, Vice-Chair; Mr. David Green; Mrs. Mary Ellen Winters; Mr. Paul Martin; Mr. Jack Sommer, and Mrs. Susan Records. Dr. Deidre Gifford, Chair was absent. Also present were Dr. Victor Mercurio, Superintendent; Mrs. Paula Dillon, Assistant Superintendent, and Mrs. Maryanne Crawford, Director of Administration.

7:00p.m. Regular Meeting

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Robert Durant, Vice-Chair.

I. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

II. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

III. Recognitions

The following recognitions were made by the Committee.

a. Kathleen Hook, Cole – 2011 Toyota International Teacher Program to Costa Rica

b. Lisa McKay- Special Olympics' Coach of the Year

c. Ani Kasparian- Winner of the Advanced Category of the 2012 Writing Contest

IV. Approval of Minutes

a. Regular for 2/7/12

On a motion by Mr. Green, which was seconded by Mrs. Winters, the Committee voted 4-0 to approve the minutes. Mr. Martin and Mrs. Records abstained.

V. Superintendent's Report

Dr. Mercurio noted the high school "dug-out" group has done all of the background work necessary to start building the dug-outs. The group would like to appear before the School Committee at the next meeting. Mr. Sullivan of SBS informed Dr. Mercurio that the softball field at Cole will not be online for the spring season due to drainage issues. The field won't be available until the end of the summer. Mr. Cobain and Mrs. Bradley are aware of this situation. Frenchtown or Hanaford will have to be used for softball. Mr. Sommer asked why Mr.

Sullivan did not inform the Committee and also asked for the cost estimates to fix the field. Dr. Mercurio will get the estimates and

report back to the Committee.

VI. School Committee Concerns

Mr. Martin received a phone call from a “home-school” parent who asked if the new “home- school” policy can be postponed. Mr. Martin asked the parent to contact the School Committee Chair who will address it with the Policy Committee. Mr. Martin also discussed the recent police presence at the high school and the negative publicity received. He discussed the issue with Mrs. Dillon who assured him that matters are not “out of control.” Mr. Durant, who is also on the Policy Committee, explained the rationale behind the revisions in the home- schooling policy. Revisions were made to bring East Greenwich’s policy in line with Rhode Island State requirements. The revised policy details the requirements needed before a parent takes on the responsibility of educating a child. Most of the policy revisions surround documentation (i.e., curriculum, attendance reporting, etc.). Mr. Durant believes that Dr. Gifford has already reached out to the parent who called Mr. Martin. Dr. Mercurio also received a call from a parent who had questions about the policy. He offered to meet with the parent and will report back to the Policy Committee.

Mr. Durant stated that the discipline issues at the high school have been addressed. Dr. Mercurio said the East Greenwich Police Chief has been extraordinary in reaching out to the high school principals regarding discipline issues. A meeting with Mrs. Dillon was also arranged after the high school incidents.

Mrs. Winters questioned the status of the Charge for naming spaces at Cole. Dr. Mercurio explained the Charge was approved, but the Committee has not been formed yet. Mrs. Winters would like to extend the opportunity to the town. This item will be discussed at the next School Committee meeting.

VII. Action Items

a. Appointments

On a motion by Mr. Green, which was seconded by Mr. Sommer, the Committee voted 5-0 (with Mrs. Records abstaining) to approve appointment #2. On a motion by Mr. Martin, which was seconded by Mrs. Winters, the Committee voted 6-0 to approve appointments #1 and appointments #3-13. The appointment for Judy Davis was approved subsequent to her receiving the proper state certification.

- 1. Head Coach Girls' Softball-Cole-Kate Warrington**
- 2. Head Coach Boys' Baseball- Cole- Matthew Records**
- 3. Head Coach Baseball-EGHS-Bob Downey**
- 4. Head Coach-Golf-EGHS-Marc Brocato**
- 5. Head Coach Girls' Lacrosse-EGHS-Judy Davis**
- 6. Head Coach Boys' Lacrosse-EGHS-Brian Trapani**
- 7. Head Coach Boys' Track-EGHS-Peter Dion**
- 8. Asst Coach Boys' Track-EGHS-Kyle Mushaweh**
- 9. Head Coach Girls' Track-EGHS-Erin Newman**
- 10. Asst Coach Girls' Track-EGHS-Kate Godin**

11. Head Coach Girls' Softball-Rob Petrucci

12. Head Coach Boys' Volleyball-EGHS-Terri Jones

13. Asst Coach Boys' Volleyball-EGHS-Ryan Garno

b. Adoption of 2013 Budget

Dr. Mercurio provided additional budget reductions (priority one). The new proposed budget includes the reductions (\$247,082) that were presented on 2/28/12 and additional reductions of \$288,064. The new reductions do not represent any programmatic cuts. Dr. Mercurio explained that if additional cuts are needed to bring the proposed increase down to a 2% level, programs will be affected. Cutting an additional \$570,000 will bring the proposed increase to 1% and will bring additional programmatic cuts. When asked what type of programs would be affected, Dr. Mercurio noted the curriculum will have to be reviewed and all extra-curricular activities (i.e., intermural, interscholastic middle school sports, mock trial, etc.) may be cut. The possibility of three or four teachers retiring may possibly reduce the budget by \$82,000 plus. The transportation cost is still unknown, but Mrs. Crawford is encouraged that the increase will be slight. Mrs. Crawford gave an overview of the priority one reductions totaling \$288,064. She noted that the facilities department may have a reduction of \$75,000 (two top step employees) as it is anticipated these employees are moving on to other opportunities. New employees will be hired at a lower step.

On a motion by Mr. Martin, which was seconded by Mr. Sommer, the Committee voted 6-0 to adopt the budget. The Committee

discussed the timeline and the possibility that additional cuts may be needed. The Committee wants to ensure that the public understands what the budget cuts will mean for each school. The Committee also discussed the possibility of RIDE reimbursement being reduced from 40% to 35%. Dr. Mercurio has made a call to Mr. DaSilva at RIDE.

c. Fields' MOU

Dr. Mercurio pointed out that the Town Council approved the MOU cover letter and updated the MOU matrix at their last meeting on 2/27/12. There was a revision on page 5 (parking lots/ roadway). There was discussion about usage at Eldredge and maintenance of the scoreboard. Mr. Green asked who is responsible to pay for repairs to the scoreboard. Dr. Mercurio will check with Mr. Cobain. Mrs. Winters would like to see detailed lists of how many teams play on each field and if the groups are school, outside users, town/recreation. Mr. Durant asked Mrs. Winters to work with Cathy Bradley to get the numbers. Mrs. Winters also discussed the work hours spent by Parks & Grounds employees as noted on page 5 of the MOU matrix and also discussed the water bill which has doubled at the high school.

VIII. Grade Configuration Committee Presentation

Dr. Mercurio explained that two forums were held at Hanaford and Eldredge on two separate evenings for parent input. A survey was also posted on the school website for parents and staff. The Charge was to find the most effective grade configuration at the elementary schools. This Charge did not look at changing to a “neighborhood

school” setting or changing kindergarten to full day. In his presentation, Dr. Mercurio discussed survey results, literature reviews, comparable district configurations, district enrollment, space needs, and the committee’s recommendations. Mrs. Dillon noted recommendation #5, which was left off the recommendation handout, recommends that Pre-K be housed in both Meadowbrook and Frenchtown. Enrollment numbers for the Pre-K program would be the same, but the program would be offered in two buildings. The recommendations were discussed and it was noted that a move of grade three students would result in NECAP testing in two grades in the same building (grades 3 and 5). Costs involved in a reconfiguration may be close to \$100,000.

IX. Discussion Items

a. Music Program at Cole

On a motion by Mr. Martin, which was seconded by Mr. Green, the Committee voted 6-0 to table this item.

X. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Martin, which was seconded by Mr. Sommer, the Committee voted 6-0 to adjourn at 8:40p.m.

CHRISTINE DIMEGLIO

SECRETARY